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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 001884

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STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG
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SUBJECT: PROPOSED POLICE PROGRAM CHANGES TO MEET THREAT
CONDITIONS IN KEY PROVINCES

REF: A) KABUL 1714 B) KABUL 746 C) KABUL 1670

Classified By: AMBASSADOR RONALD NEUMANN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

Summary

1. (C) Operationally-focussed shifts in the Afghan police program will address the security situation in the south and to President Karzai's concerns (ref a). The Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan (CSTC-A, formerly OSC-A), in coordination with the Embassy, the German Police Program Office, and MOI, has revised the ANP fielding plan to provide a temporary surge capacity. The plan has been briefed to Ministers. President Karzai has agreed to it. Kandahar, Helmand, Paktika, and Uruzgan will receive a plus-up of uniformed police amounting to over 1,800 in total. The border police would also be increased by about 4,000. Both increases would be gained by dissolving the highway police, who are universally seen as corrupt and ineffective. An additional 2,100 patrolmen would be hired on a temporary basis to reinforce the standby police, or rapid reaction force, that is based at the regional police commands. Standby police battalions would also be shifted to the south and east to meet the threat conditions there. All the new or transferred policemen would be trained as soon as possible at ANP Regional Training Centers. CSTC-A will also implement other, longer-term measures, to better meet security concerns in other parts of the country. Most important of these is moving ahead with rank and pay reform, since without good leadership and sufficient pay to deter corruption, the ANP will never be a fully successful institution. President Karzai understands that we are linking the increase in personnel and equipment to his decisions on pay and rank reform. We still have issues, but are close to resolution.

2. (C) All these measures must be taken in light of the

consideration that we expected increased violence this spring and understand it must be countered on a number of fronts, including a public outreach campaign and better military-to-military cooperation with Pakistan. Both of these efforts have already begun. All the parts taken together will eventually result in a much stronger and more effective answer to the problem of insecurity in the south than President Karzai's floated proposal of "auxiliary police" composed of half-trained tribal militias. We believe we are on the right track with this program, but as always we recognize that there may be additional course corrections as we continue to head toward the long-term objective of stability, public confidence, and scope for reconstruction. End Summary.

13. (C) After his meeting with Charge and CFC-A CG LTG Eikenberry on April 15 (ref a), President Karzai directed the Ministry of Interior to initiate a series of consultative meetings with governors of provinces in which the security situation is perceived to be of concern, to understand more fully the nature of the problem and develop a course of action. The six provinces were Kandahar, Zabol, Uruzgan, Paktika, Nuristan, and Konar. International participation included senior representatives from Embassy, CFC-A, CSTC-A, and the German Police Program Office (GPPO).

14. (C) The group agreed that the GOA concern that there are insufficient police in some provinces was justified. It became clear that the police fielding plan ("tashkil") for 62,000 police that had been developed by MOI in conjunction with the international community and approved by President Karzai in December 2005 was not well-designed to address

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threats facing various provinces along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. It assigned the number of police on the basis of an algorithm that did not factor in threat conditions, terrain, road networks, or border crossings, and was also based on prospective "peace-time" conditions.

15. (C) In response to these findings, CSTC-A, in coordination with the Embassy, GPPO and the MOI, has developed a temporary adjustment to the fielding plan. The adjustment was briefed to GOA Ministers and National Security Advisor Rassoul on April 25. It was presented to President Karzai for his approval on April 27. Under the plan, the Highway Police (AHP) will be dissolved as an institution separate from the uniformed police (AUP) and border police (ABP). The 5,800 police slots freed up by this action will be transferred as follows: 3,940 to the border police, and 1,860 to the uniformed police. These 1,860 will be deployed to four key provinces: Kandahar will receive 800; Paktika, 300; Helmand, 600; and Uruzgan, 150. Moreover, an additional 2,100 policemen will be recruited and trained. These will be deployed to the regional command centers located at Jalalabad, Paktia, and Kandahar, to reinforce the 4,100 "standby police," or rapid reaction force (ASP) already assigned there. All personnel will be trained at the ANP Regional Training Centers (RTCs) to ensure quality. (Note: The RTCs have enough surge capacity to handle the load. End note.)

16. (C) Karzai's Reaction: Ambassador, CFC-A DCG MG Wilson, CSTC-A CG MG Durbin, German Ambassador and German Special Ambassador for Police met with Karzai on April 27 to brief the plan. Karzai accepted the plan. He requested to see operational detail. He is still talking of including local "community police." The basic issue is agreed with us - citizens must be protected so that they will support the government. We think the operational detail that is being coordinated with MOD and MOI will meet the need.

17. (C) CSTC-A has established an aggressive timeline for this readjustment, starting with the dissolution of the AHP by May 15. Their plan is that all the elements will be in

place by summer. It is recognized that there may be difficulties in implementing the program - in particular, there may be a high attrition rate among former AHP who are unwilling to retrain as border policemen. While this might slow things down, the Highway Police is, as Karzai said, corrupt; losing it will not be a loss. The temporary hire of 2,100 ASP within the national police structure would mean an additional expense of approximately USD 6.6 million per year which is not covered under the Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA), since it would be on top of the 62,000-person police force agreed upon with the international community. However the GPPO has agreed that there should be a temporary plus-up in forces and is willing to work with the GOA and the U.S. in considering creative solutions to the funding issue. The salary cost must be borne by the GOA. Karzai agreed. Significantly, none of the GOA participants at the working level, among the uniformed police leadership, or the ministers themselves had any objection to dissolving the highway police, the leadership of which is universally seen as corrupt and incompetent.

18. (C) In addition, CFC-A and CSTC-A have identified other key recommendations for improving the police situation throughout the country, but particularly in the south and east. These include accelerating the rank and pay reform

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program as a national imperative, speeding up the man-equip-train program for the standby police, establishing regional commands in five provincial centers, establishing regional coordination centers (RCCs) and provincial coordination centers (PCCs) immediately where they do not exist, and improving performance at RCCs and PCCs where they already exist. Further, two ASP battalions will be shifted from low-threat regions in the north and west to high-threat regions in the south and east. Finally, distribution of needed weapons and ammunition to critical areas will start shortly. This will alleviate the equipment shortfalls that have plagued the ANP since the inception of the training program.

19. (C) The Ambassador pressed Karzai to finish pay and rank reform. Karzai wants more ethnic balancing; particularly, more Uzbeks. There are Uzbek officers on the qualification list just below the threshold, and we and the Germans believe we can resolve this issue quickly and acceptably. The Minister of Interior gave Karzai a revised list. There is a complicated issue in pay reform that involved the Finance Ministry and IMF rules. The German Ambassador agreed with Ambassador Neumann that we would push this in the new donors' committee (JCMB).

Comment

110. (C) Several months ago we noted the likely increase in violence in Afghanistan's south this spring (ref b), and now we are seeing it. The Canadians are still settling into Kandahar, and the poppy eradication campaign has contributed to an increase in violence in the short term. What has also become clear recently is that the original planning for the manning and deployment of the ANP did not sufficiently factor in the persistence of the insurgency in some remote areas, and the critical problem of cross-border infiltration. Deploying additional uniformed, border, and standby police will go some way toward solving the problem. Certainly it is a far better solution than the idea of half-trained, locally-recruited "auxiliary police" that Karzai initially floated. However, that is only part of the answer. Over the medium term, the Regional Command concept will be crucial to strengthening the effectiveness of the ANP. And starting now and into the long term, the success of the ANP will depend on full implementation of pay and rank reform. Without strong leadership and a well-paid police force (that is therefore less vulnerable to corruption), sheer numbers alone will never make the police an effective institution in this country.

11. (C) In addition, we need to look at other ways to counter the growing perception of a Taliban threat that exceeds the reality on the ground. Rumors abound, whether of Taliban sanctuary areas or Pakistan support for the insurgency. The GOA needs to craft a credible public message that will convince the Afghan people that it is continuing to extend security through the development of the Afghan National Security Forces, both army and police. Along those lines, the Embassy and CFC-A have also developed and forwarded to Washington a set of key themes (ref c) that could be most effectively deployed as part of a larger outreach campaign. We need to make clear, too, that Afghan deployments will be backed up with Coalition forces - the Afghan Security Forces will not be allowed to fail. Additionally, what is true throughout Afghanistan is particularly true in the south: reconstruction assistance - primarily roads, power and water - to boost economic

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development should be one of our most powerful weapons. The absence of economic infrastructure there is providing an advantage to the Taliban. Finally, the recent Tripartite Commission meeting in Islamabad reflects the continued potential of that forum for cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan on cross-border issues, including in the south. Any improvement in that regard would greatly facilitate ANSF, Coalition, and ISAF actions to deal with the insurgents already present in the country, by cutting off reinforcements of men and equipment. NATO will be fully on the ground within a few months. If this multi-pronged approach is fully implemented it should, within a few months, begin to show results - we may hope to see lessening of violent activity and an increased confidence in the GOA on the part of local people.
NEUMANN